



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

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April 17, 2008

To: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
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Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

PROGRESS REPORT ON LONG-TERM LEAVE MANAGEMENT

In a January 29, 2008 memorandum, we advised your Board that the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and Department of Human Resources (DHR) would be responsible for development and implementation of a new Long-Term Leave Management Program (LTLMP). For this program, long-term leave is defined as absence for more than six months. The primary goal is to reduce the number of employees on long-term leave. DHR is working with my Risk Management staff to develop a LTLMP that will:

- Monitor long-term leaves and departmental vacancies using reports from departments;
- Provide additional training for departmental Return-to-Work Coordinators on long-term leave and return-to-work procedures;
- Develop updated information and guidelines to facilitate departments' follow-up with employees on long-term leave;
- Work with departments to facilitate employee's return to safe and productive work compatible with work restrictions and essential job functions;
- Assist with job placement in another department if reasonable accommodation is not possible with the current department;
- Work with departments to facilitate retirement, medical release, or termination of employment when appropriate; and
- Obtain funding for and implement a new occupational health system which will:
1) provide County departments with online access to employee medical records, work restrictions, and accommodations; 2) send notifications to departments when an employee's medical status changes; and 3) provide standard reports designed to manage medical clearances.

The LTLMP is divided into two phases. The first phase includes developing instructions and guidelines for departments, data gathering and data analysis and developing intervention opportunities/strategies. The first phase should be completed by July 1, 2008. The second phase includes monitoring long-term leaves and departmental vacancies, and working with departments to develop an individual plan to handle each employee who has been on long-term leave based on that individual's circumstances. We will schedule periodic return-to-work case reviews with each department. A small team of DHR and CEO Risk Management staff are available to assist departments as necessary. The second phase overlaps the first phase and is anticipated to begin May 15, 2008.

On February 22, 2008, DHR sent a memorandum to Department Heads advising them that DHR and CEO Risk Management would be working closely with their departments to reduce the number of employees on long-term leave and:

- Advised departments on the key elements of the new LTLMP;
- Instructed departments to send DHR a monthly Long-Term Absence Report listing all employees off work on long-term leaves of absence;
- Instructed departments to provide a monthly Vacancy Report listing all departmental vacancies; and
- Provided departments with a sample letter to elicit employee contact from employees who are on long-term leave.

The first monthly reports were due March 15, 2008. DHR is summarizing and analyzing the long-term leave reports to assess the accuracy and completeness of the data, the number and type of long-term leaves, and identify appropriate intervention opportunities/strategies. To date, departments have reported a total of 1,799 employees on various types of long-term leave of absence. Departments are already taking actions to deal with the employees identified in the long-term leave reports. They are contacting employees for up-to-date disability status and scheduling interactive meetings. We are assessing the details of the information submitted and anticipate that the long-term leave total will actually be higher when the preliminary data has been fully analyzed.

Please contact Michael J. Henry, Director of Personnel, at (213) 974-2406 if you have any questions or need additional information.

WTF:ES
MJH:smh

c: All department heads